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DOCTOR STRANGE
MT
MASTER OF THE MYSTIC ARTS
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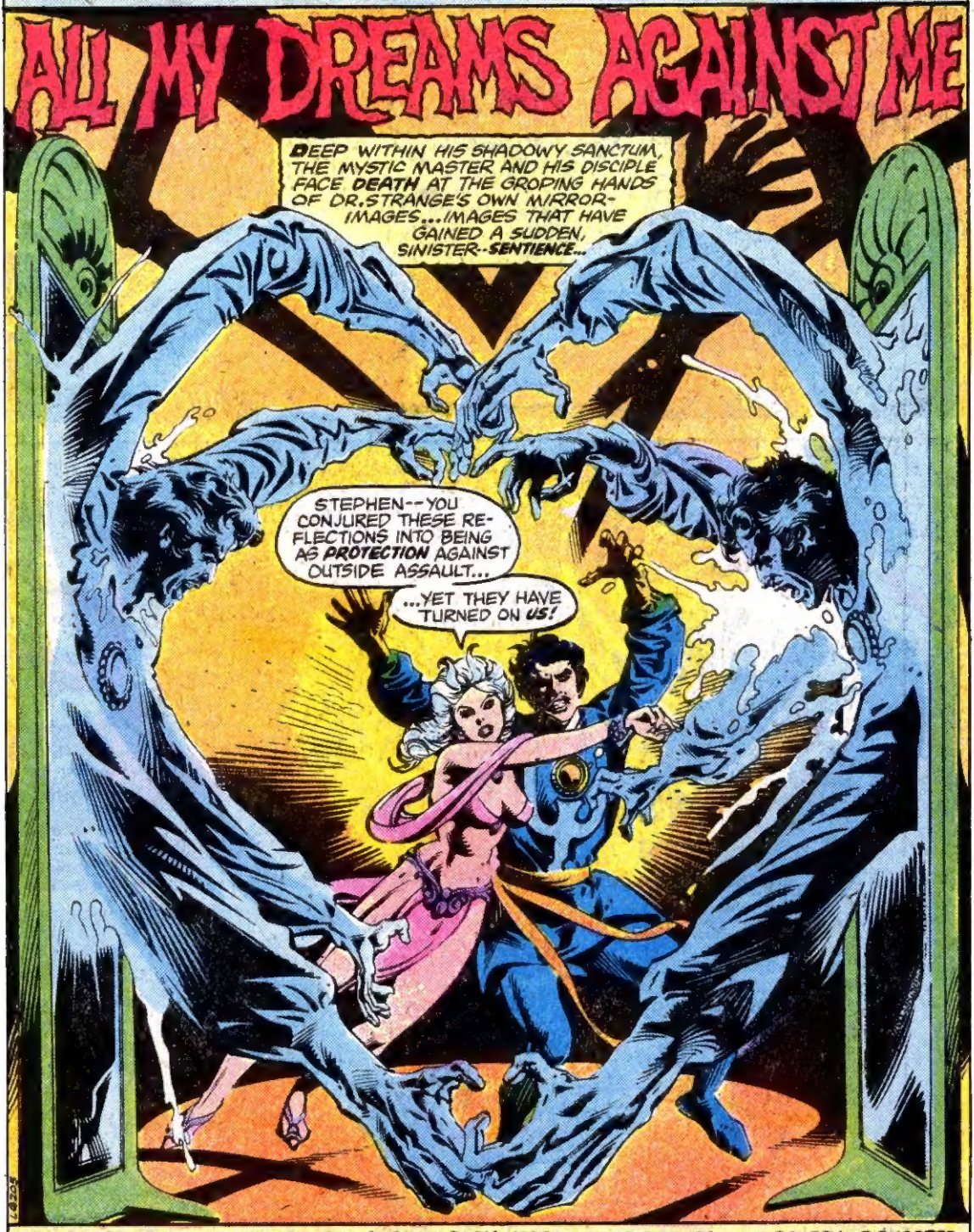
BERNIE K
THROUGH A GLASS STRANGELY!

ALL MY DREAMS AGAINST ME


DEEP WITHIN HIS SHADOWY SANCTUM, THE MYSTIC MASTER AND HIS DISCIPLE FACE DEATH AT THE GROPING HANDS OF DR. STRANGE'S OWN MIRROR-IMAGES... IMAGES THAT HAVE GAINED A SUDDEN, SINISTER--SENTIENCE...
STEPHEN--YOU CONJURED THESE REFLECTIONS INTO BEING AS PROTECTION AGAINST OUTSIDE ASSAULT...
...YET THEY HAVE TURNED ON US!

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CLEA IS RIGHT. IN SOME WAY MY INCANTATION HAS GONE AWRY. BUT HOW? I SENSED NO OTHER PRESENCE WHILE CASTING THE SPELL THAT CREATED THESE REFLECTIONS.
THERE IS ANOTHER FORCE AT WORK HERE. ONE WHOSE POWER HAS BREACHED EVEN MY MAGICAL DEFENSES.
AND WORSE... CLEA SEEMS UNLIKE HERSELF. SHE'S FRIGHTENED, UNABLE TO CONTEND WITH MY DEMONIC DUPLICATE.
PERHAPS A DIVERSION WILL SUCCEED WHERE SHEER POWER HAS FAILED.
TO YOUR MASTER, MY WONDROUS CLOAK.
AHHH, THE CAPE HAS CONFOUNDED THE LIVING IMAGE--
--BY PASSING BETWEEN IT AND MYSELF.
AND NOW, MY MULTI-LIMBED ANTAGONIST...
...FEEL THE WRATH OF DOCTOR STRANGE!

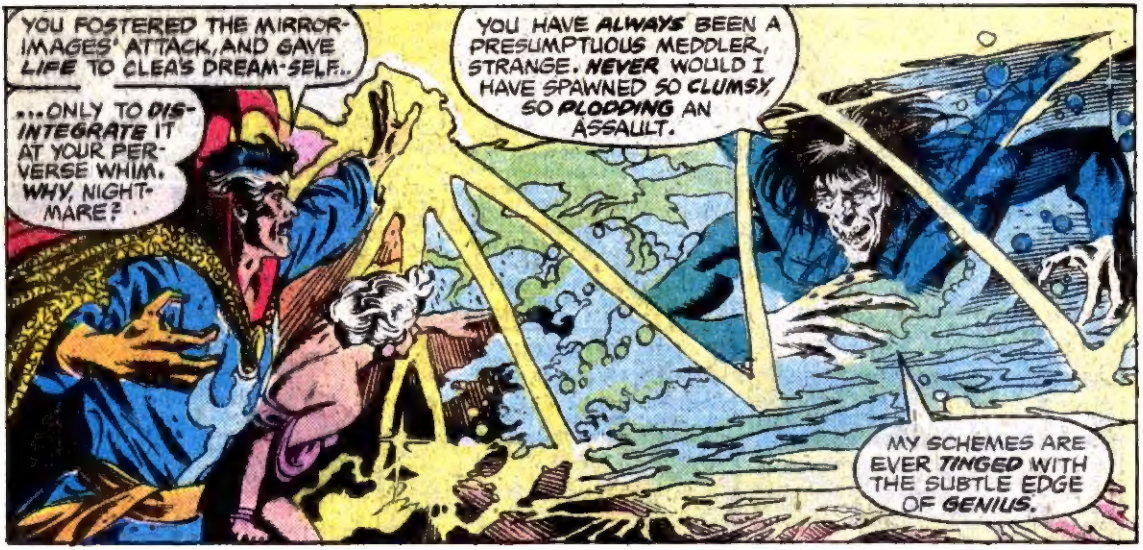
RETURN--RETURN TO THE SHINING SURFACE FROM WHENCE YOU CAME...YOUR NATIVE REALITY, THE BI-DIMENSIONAL PLANE.
PRAISE THE VISHANTI! THE CONGEALING COILS ABOUT MY LOVE'S THROAT ARE DISSIPATING.
BY HOGGOTH! THEIR COMBINED EFFORTS HAVE SUNDERED MY SPELL...
...AND NOW THRUST IT BACK AT ME WITH DOUBLED STRENGTH! APPARENTLY, THE IMAGES' EXTRA LIMBS ALLOW THEM TO CONJURE WITH GREATER INTENSITY THAN I.
PERHAPS THE MANY-FACETED GEM PURLOINED FROM THE PURPLE DIMENSION* MAY BE USED TO AMPLIFY--
*STRANGE TALES #119--JO.
--AND FOCUS MY AMULET'S OCCULT ENERGIES.
O BEAM OF PUREST LIGHT, HEIGHTENED BY AGGAMON'S DISTANT MIGHT, SMITE THIS ENTITY OF EVIL, AND REMOVE HIS SUBSTANCE FROM MY SIGHT!

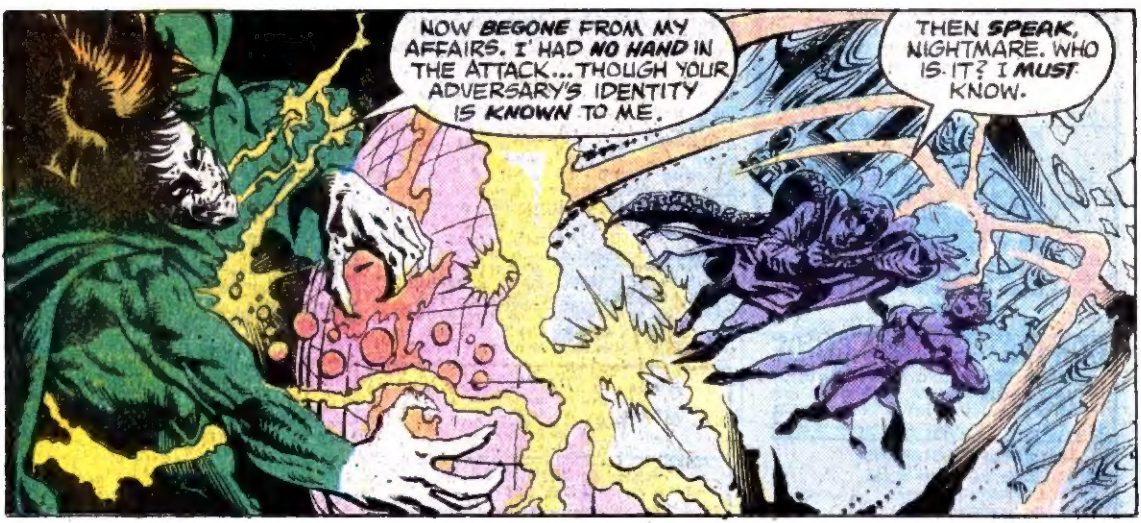
AID ME, STEPHEN. MY MAGICKS HAVE NO EFFECT.
CLEA WAS ENTRAPPED BY THE ICY TENDRILS OF IKTHALON AS IF SHE WERE A NOVICE.
THIS IS NOT THE WOMAN I KNOW. I SHALL--
--UNNNGH!
BRAKT!
THE IMAGE HAS COLLAPSED THE WALL... MUST RENDER IT INTANGIBLE-- NOW!
THE MASTER MAGE SLIPS EXPERTLY FROM BENEATH THE CRUSHING BRICKWORK AS CLEA'S FROZEN FORM FLOATS THROUGH AN OPEN WINDOW.
CLEA'S BEHAVIOR IS A BETRAYAL OF MY TUTELAGE. WHAT IS AMISS?
BUT NO TIME TO DWELL ON THIS NOW! FIRST...
...I CALL UPON THE FLAMES OF THE FALTINE TO DISSOLVE THIS FRIGID PRISON--
-- AS THE SHIELD OF THE SERAPHIM SURROUNDS MY LOVE WITH ITS WARMING GLOW.

THE FRAGILE FIGURE OF CLEA IS SWEPT SUDDENLY BACK INTO THE DEVASTATED HOUSE...
...CARRIED ON A RAGING WIND THAT ARISES AS IF FROM ANOTHER WORLD.
TURN AND FACE ME, SPAWN OF TAINTED SPELLS!
FACE ONE WHO COMMANDS THE SWIRLING STORMS OF SATANISH HIMSELF, BEFORE WHICH YOU ARE AS THE AUTUMN LEAF.
EXCELLENT. MY DRAMATIC REAPPEARANCE HAS STARTLED THE MIRROR-IMAGE GIVING ME TIME TO ACT.
GAZE DEEPLY AT THE SPARKING PRISM OF THE PURPLE GEM, FALSE ONE.
PEER INTO ITS CLOUDED DEPTHS AND KNOW... YOU WILL SOON RESIDE THERE FOR ETERNITY!

CRACKLING BOLTS OF ARCANE LIGHTNING ENLARGE THE PULSING JEWEL, WHICH DESCENDS UPON THE ENTRANCED MIRROR-IMAGE--
--SWALLOWING IT, THEN SHRINKING, WITH ITS HELPLESS CAPTIVE LOCKED FOREVER WITHIN.
ONCE, I BELIEVED THIS TO BE BUT A DEVICE FOR BRIDGING THE DIMENSIONS.
YET THE GEM'S BLOATED APPEARANCE, AS IF IT WERE A LIVING BEING THAT HAD CONSUMED ITS--PREY...
...MAKES ME WONDER ABOUT ITS TRUE NATURE.
BUT NOW... CEASE YOUR FURY, O THUNDEROUS TEMPEST. YOUR MASTER BIDS YOU--ABATE!
I MUST SEE TO--
--CLEA! WHAT IS IT?
AAHH!
SH-SHE'S FADING INTO MIST BEFORE MY VERY EYES! WHAT CAN IT MEAN?
CLEA--NO! SHE'S GONE--GONE! I KNOW NOT WHAT POWERS HAVE TAKEN MY LOVE FROM ME--
--BUT THEY WILL FIND DR. STRANGE A FEARSOME NEMESIS.
I SHALL NOT RE--
AHHHH!
--EH? A VOICE, SOUNDING LIKE--!

TWIN DEMONS OF HOPE AND DREAD ADD WINGS TO HIS BOUNDING FEET AS THE STARTLED SORCERER PURSUES THE SOUND OF THE PIERCING SCREAM UPSTAIRS...
...AND FINDS--
CLEA!
THIS CANNOT BE! MOMENTS AGO I WATCHED AS SHE PERISHED.
YET MY OCCULT PERCEPTIONS INSIST--THIS IS CLEA!
MY POWERS DESERT ME! STEPHEN, HELP!
AND HER VOICE--HER VERY GESTURES, AS IF SHE WERE DREAMING OF THE INCIDENT THAT OCCURRED BELOW.
OHH, STEPHEN, HOLD ME. I DREAMT --FIGURES WITH YOUR FACE TRIED TO KILL ME. MY SPELLS DID NOTHING. I WAS SO HELPLESS. HOLD ME, PLEASE.
BELOVED, AWAKEN. I AM WITH YOU. AWAKEN.
CALM YOURSELF. WE ARE TOGETHER AGAIN.
AND NOTHING WILL PART US NOW, MY LOVE.
WE ARE BEING TOYED WITH. I HAVE BUT ONE FOE CAPABLE OF MERGING YOUR DREAM-SELF WITH THIS REALITY.
LET THE VAPOURS OF VALTORR DIVIDE, IN THE NAME OF THE ALL SEEING, REVEAL MY ANCIENT ENEMY, IN WHOSE REALM ALL LAY DREAMING.
A COSMIC PORTAL CREAKS OPEN IN RESPONSE TO THE SHOUTED SPELL.
AND A SPECTRAL OUTLINE TAKES OMINOUS SHAPE. AN OUTLINE BELONGING TO...
NIGHTMARE!
IT WAS YOU BEHIND THOSE MORBID MACHINATIONS.

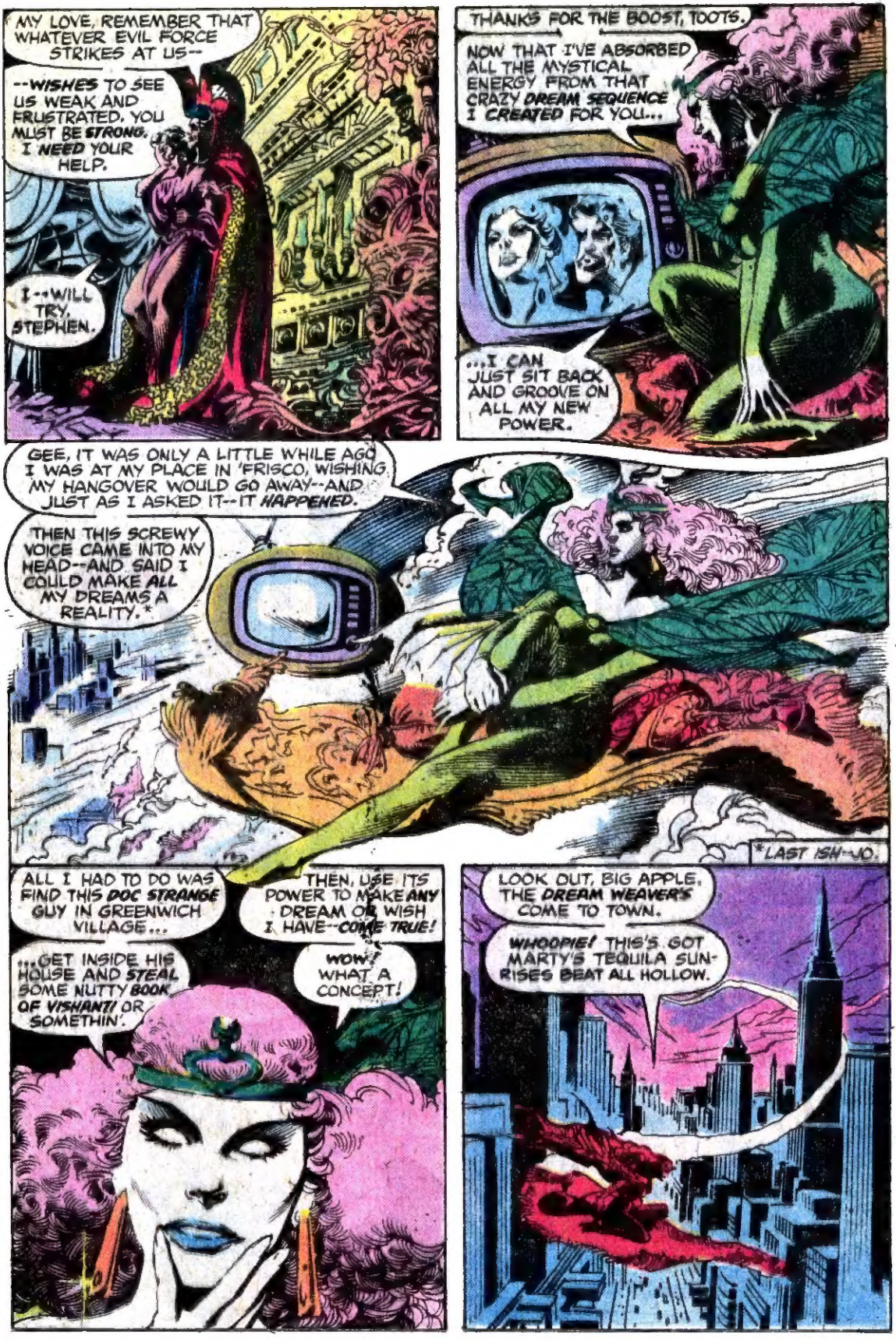

YOU FOSTERED THE MIRROR-IMAGES' ATTACK, AND GAVE LIFE TO CLEA'S DREAM-SELF...
...ONLY TO DIS-INTEGRATE IT AT YOUR PER-VERSE WHIM. WHY, NIGHT-MARE?
YOU HAVE ALWAYS BEEN A PRESUMPTUOUS MEDDLER, STRANGE. NEVER WOULD I HAVE SPAWNED SO CLUMSY, SO BLOODING AN ASSAULT.
MY SCHEMES ARE EVER TINGED WITH THE SUBTLE EDGE OF GENIUS.


NOW BEGONE FROM MY AFFAIRS. I HAD NO HAND IN THE ATTACK...THOUGH YOUR ADVERSARY'S IDENTITY IS KNOWN TO ME.
THEN SPEAK, NIGHTMARE. WHO IS IT? I MUST KNOW.

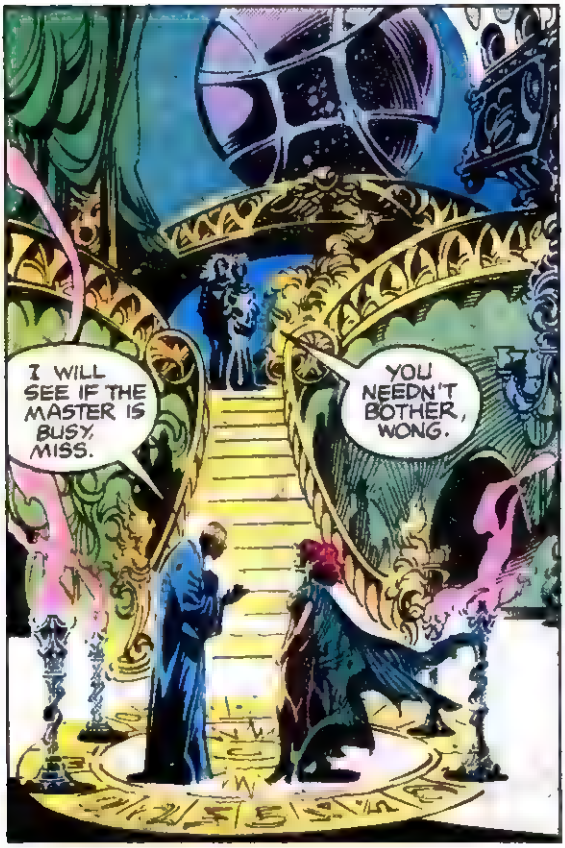
A CURSE UPON YOUR QUESTIONS, MORTAL. I ANSWER TO NO ONE.
BUT THIS I WILL SAY...
...BEWARE YOUR ENEMY...FOR HE DWELLS IN THE DARKNESS.

GONE. HE IS THE MOST ENIGMATIC OF ENEMIES, BUT I SENSE HE SPEAKS THE TRUTH.
I AM SICK OF THIS! SICK OF BEING MANIPULATED AND LAUGHED AT FROM AFAR!

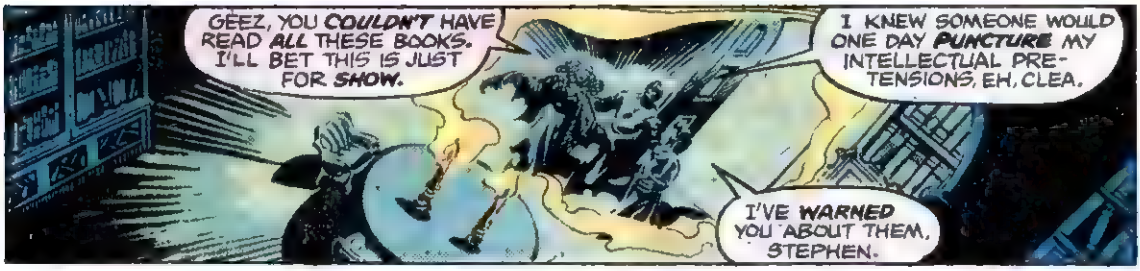
I'M TIRED OF BEING A PAWN ON ANOTHER'S CHESS-BOARD.
I LEFT THAT EXISTENCE WHEN I FLED DORMAMMU, IN THE DARK DI-MENSION. I COULDN'T SURVIVE IT AGAIN.
KRAK!


MY LOVE, REMEMBER THAT WHATEVER EVIL FORCE STRIKES AT US--
--WISHES TO SEE US WEAK AND FRUSTRATED. YOU MUST BE STRONG. I NEED YOUR HELP.
I--WILL TRY, STEPHEN.
THANKS FOR THE BOOST, TOOTS.
NOW THAT I'VE ABSORBED ALL THE MYSTICAL ENERGY FROM THAT CRAZY DREAM SEQUENCE I CREATED FOR YOU...
...I CAN JUST SIT BACK AND GROOVE ON ALL MY NEW POWER.
GEE, IT WAS ONLY A LITTLE WHILE AGO I WAS AT MY PLACE IN 'FRISCO, WISHING MY HANGOVER WOULD GO AWAY--AND JUST AS I ASKED IT--IT HAPPENED.
THEN THIS SCREWY VOICE CAME INTO MY HEAD--AND SAID I COULD MAKE ALL MY DREAMS A REALITY.*
*LAST ISH--JO.
ALL I HAD TO DO WAS FIND THIS DOC STRANGE GUY IN GREENWICH VILLAGE...
...GET INSIDE HIS HOUSE AND STEAL SOME NUTTY BOOK OF VISHANTI OR SOMETHIN'.
THEN, USE ITS POWER TO MAKE ANY DREAM OR WISH I HAVE--COME TRUE!
WOW! WHAT A CONCEPT!
LOOK OUT, BIG APPLE. THE DREAM WEAVER'S COME TO TOWN.
WHOOPIE! THIS'S GOT MARTY'S TEQUILA SUNRISES BEAT ALL HOLLOW.

YOU MUST NOT AROUSE UNDUE SUSPICION. DESCEND AND DISGUISE YOURSELF BEFORE REACHING THE HOUSE.
THERE'S THAT BOZO'S VOICE IN MY BRAIN AGAIN, BUT I CAN'T SEE ANYBODY. DEFINITELY WEIRD.
WELL, I'M GONNA TAKE HIS ADVICE, 'CAUSE HE HASN'T STEERED ME WRONG YET.
I JUST WONDER WHEN THE BUBBLE'S LIABLE TO BURST. AFTER ALL, THIS CAN'T GO ON FOREVER ...CAN IT?
BUT AS LONG AS IT LASTS, I'LL JUST HAVE MYSELF A BALL.
YES, MA'AM. YOU'VE COME A LONG WAY, BABY--IN A HALF HOUR. AND THERE'S LOTS MORE TO COME.
THAT'S THE PLACE ALL RIGHT. WHAT A FREAKY LOOKIN' PAD... STRAIGHT FROM THE ADDAMS FAMILY.
HI, HANDSOME. IS THE BIG KAHUNA TA HOME? I'VE GOT SOMETHING TO GET OFF MY CHEST. DIG?
BIG KAHU-- OH... THE MASTER. YES, COME RIGHT IN.


I WILL SEE IF THE MASTER IS BUSY, MISS.
YOU NEEDN'T BOTHER, WONG.

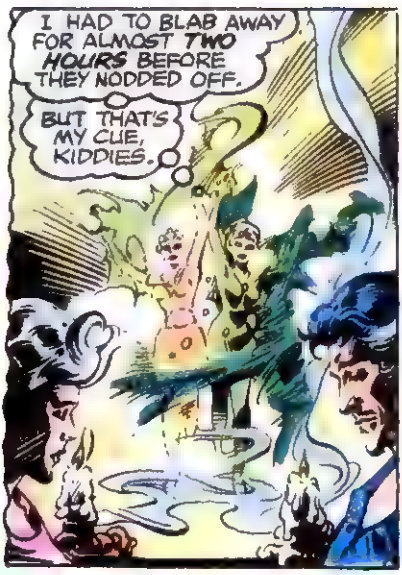
WELL, ALL RIGHT! YOU MUST BE DOCTOR STRANGE.
YES. AND YOUR NAME--?
BARBIE --BARBIE ROBB. PLEASED TO MEET'CHA.
I'M HERE 'CAUSE I'VE HEARD YOU SPECIALIZE IN HELPING PEOPLE WITH CRAZY PROBLEMS. AND BOY, HAVE I GOT A BEAUT.
IT'S THESE DREAMS I'VE BEEN HAVING LATELY...WAKING UP SCREAMING IN A COLD SWEAT. ALL VERY ICKY, Y'KNOW.
PERHAPS YOU'LL BE MORE COMFORTABLE IN MY STUDY, WHERE WE CAN DISSECT THIS "ICKY" AFFAIR.
SUCH TOLERANCE, STEPHEN. HOW DO YOU DO IT?


GEEZ, YOU COULDN'T HAVE READ ALL THESE BOOKS. I'LL BET THIS IS JUST FOR SHOW.
I KNEW SOMEONE WOULD ONE DAY PUNCTURE MY INTELLECTUAL PRE-TENSIONS, EH, CLEA.
I'VE WARNED YOU ABOUT THEM, STEPHEN.

NOW LISTEN UP, DOC. HERE'S THE SAD STORY.
IT ALL BEGAN WHEN I WAS THREE YEARS OLD. I HAD THESE NUTTY DREAMS ABOUT HANGING UPSIDE DOWN IN A SPIDER'S WEB ON SUNDAY...

SOMETIME LATER...
...AND THEN MARTY MADE ME GET RID OF ELMER, MY PET TARANTULA.
NOW I KEEP SEEING THAT UGLY FACE IN MY DREAMS--MARTY'S THAT IS. ELMER'S CUTE.

UNTIL...
THINK YOU CAN HELP ME, DOC?
DOC?
WELL, HIP HIP HOORAY.


I HAD TO BLAB AWAY FOR ALMOST TWO HOURS BEFORE THEY NODDED OFF.
BUT THAT'S MY CUE, KIDDIES.

JUST ENJOY THOSE FORTY WINKS, FOLKS, WHILE I DRAW OUT YOUR DREAM-SELF, DOC--
--AS I DID TO YOUR LADY A WHILE BACK...SO YOU'LL DO MY BIDDING.
OKAY, DREAM-DOC, YOU'RE MINE TO COMMAND, NO IFS, ANDS, OR BUTS.
I AM YOURS.
THAT'S PEACHY. NOW, MAKE YOURSELF USEFUL AND GET ME THE BOOK OF VISHANTI.
AS YOU WISH, MY DEAR.
MMM. THIS GUY IS SOME HUNK.
HEY, MUCHO THANKS, MANDRAKE, I'M NOT ONE FOR READING.
--BUT IN THIS CASE I'LL MAKE AN EXCEPTION.
A DICK AND JANE READER THIS AIN'T. WHAT IS ALL THIS GIBBERISH?
MAYBE IT'S UPSIDE DOWN.
I HATE PEOPLE LOOKING OVER MY SHOULDER WHEN I'M READING. ALOHA, CUTIE.
IF YOU'RE NEEDED, I'LL BANG A GONG.
OOPS-- YOU'RE BACK AGAIN. ONLY I CAN SEE THROUGH YOU LIKE CELLOPHANE.
THIS IS MY ASTRAL SELF. I AM NOT SO EASILY DISMISSED.

DON'T BE ALARMED.
I'M MERELY SEEING THAT YOUR FASCINATION WITH THIS TOME IS SATISFIED...
...TO A GREATER EXTENT THAN YOU EVER--DREAMED.
;MMMUFFF(
YIKES! ONE MINUTE I'M STANDING IN THAT MUSTY STUDY--
--AND THE NEXT SECOND, I'M IN THE MIDDLE OF OUTTAKES FROM FANTASIA.
NAVIGATION WITHIN THE ENDLESS DIMENSIONS OF THE VISHANTI REQUIRES GREAT EFFORT, DREAM WEAVER.

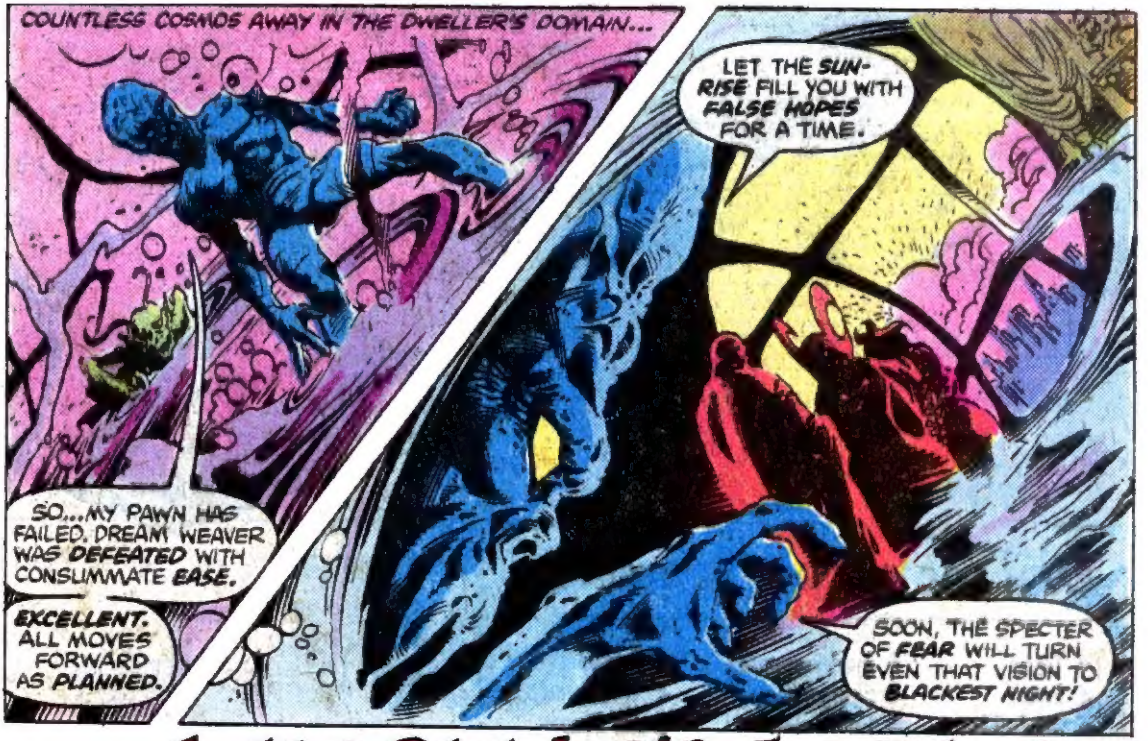
YOU, WHO WARP THE VERY FABRIC OF MAN'S MOST PRECIOUS MEANS OF RELEASE--HIS DREAMS...
...MUST KNOW THE SEVERITY OF YOUR DESECRATION AND PAY IN FULL.
I-I'M BEING SUCKED DOWN SOME BIG DRAIN, LIKE DIRT IN A SINK!

WITHIN THE SACRED WRITINGS OF THE VI-SHANTI RESIDES EVERY COUNTER-SPELL KNOWN TO MAGE AND MYSTIC.
AND THEREIN EXISTS THE ANSWER TO EVEN SUCH POWER AS YOU POSSESS.

"THE SHAMBLING DENIZENS THAT STALK THE HIDDEN LANSCAPES OF YOUR OWN MIND..."
"... NOW SHRED THE GOSSAMER-THIN VEIL--"
"-- WHICH SEPARATES EGO FROM ID."
THE FUTILITY OF YOUR FLIGHT SHOULD BE EVIDENT. FOR EVEN AMIDST COUNTLESS DIMENSIONS--
--YOU CAN NEVER ESCAPE YOURSELF.

THE LESSON IS LEARNED. THE EXPERIENCE ENDED!
THOUGH I WIPE THE DREAM WEAVER IDENTITY FROM YOUR MIND...
...THE INSIGHTS YOU HAVE GAINED FROM THIS ORDEAL ARE ETCHED FOREVER UPON YOUR SOUL.
YOU KNEW OF HER DUPLICITY ALL ALONG, DIDN'T YOU, STEPHEN?
YES, CLEA. I PLAYED HER LITTLE GAME TO A POINT, THAT I MIGHT LEARN OF THE TRUE EVIL BEHIND HER.
AND, IN THAT, I HAVE FAILED. MY SORCEROUS PROBE OF HER MEMORY REVEALS NOTHING.
AT LEAST YOU KNOW HER PLACE OF ORIGIN.
THUS, LET OUR TWIN SPELLS FLOW FORTH AS ONE...
...RETURNING THE DREAM WEAVER WHENCE SHE CAME.

WE HAVE WON A SKIRMISH, STEPHEN, WHILE OUR REAL ENEMY REMAINS HIDDEN.
I SENSE A MALIGNANT FORCE BEHIND THIS, CLEA, DEADLIER THAN ANY WE HAVE EVER FACED.


COUNTLESS COSMOS AWAY IN THE DWELLER'S DOMAIN...
SO...MY PAWN HAS FAILED. DREAM WEAVER WAS DEFEATED WITH CONSUMMATE EASE.
EXCELLENT. ALL MOVES FORWARD AS PLANNED.
LET THE SUN-RISE FILL YOU WITH FALSE HOPES FOR A TIME.
SOON, THE SPECTER OF FEAR WILL TURN EVEN THAT VISION TO BLACKEST NIGHT!

NEXT: A MIDSUMMER'S NIGHTMARE!